

Healthy at Worship – Archdiocese of Louisville
Masses and other Liturgical Celebrations

Revised August 12, 2021

I. General Information

1. Unless serious reasons intervene, Archbishop Kurtz is planning to reinstate the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation for the Archdiocese of Louisville, effective the weekend of September 4-5. Illness and/or the necessary care of others who are ill, serious concerns about exposure to COVID, and sensible precautions on the part of those who are unable to be vaccinated (e.g. children under 12) exempt individuals from this obligation (CCC #2181).
2. Pastors and their staff are asked to continue communicating with parishioners who are unable to attend Mass, to visit them, and to make sacraments available to them if possible.
3. The directives outlined in this document extend to all liturgies and events/meetings held on parish property, including but not limited to funerals, weddings, Eucharistic adoration, meetings of parish staff and committees, formation programs, etc.
4. Pastors should evaluate the practice of routinely live streaming or recording of the Sunday Mass, with a focus on inviting worshipers back to the church building. Over the course of the pandemic, access to liturgies online has been a source of connection and comfort to the homebound, and pastors may opt to continue this ministry for those who remain homebound. Nevertheless, pastors ought to communicate to parishioners, in a pastoral way, that viewing the Mass online, when one is otherwise able to attend in person, does not constitute participation in the Mass and does not fulfill the obligation to attend Mass.
5. The wearing of masks is optional for fully-vaccinated individuals. Those who are not fully vaccinated are required to wear masks indoors for liturgies and other parish functions. Please note that masks are required at any school functions, including Mass, for students, faculty, staff, and visitors. Masks also are required at programming involving children unable to be vaccinated, such as parish religious education programs.
6. When ministers of the Church visit hospitals and other facilities, the policies in place at those facilities are to be followed at all times, even if these are more restrictive than archdiocesan guidelines.

II. Directives for Liturgical Celebrations

1. Holy Communion is distributed to the faithful under the species of bread only. If possible, use additional chalices for concelebrant(s) and/or deacon(s). The distribution of the chalice to the assembly remains under review, and this practice will be returned when it is prudent. It may be helpful to remind the faithful of the Church's teachings on reception of Holy Communion: those who receive Communion under only one species receive the fullness of the sacrament and all its graces. The Sacred Host contains the body, blood, soul, and divinity of Jesus Christ, which can never be separated.
2. The faithful have the right to receive the Sacred Host in the hand or on the tongue.
3. Pastors may exercise pastoral judgment in returning to pre-pandemic liturgical practices in areas such as music ministry, hospitality ministry, lector ministry, the use of holy water, the exchange of peace, Children's Liturgy of the Word, presenting bread and wine at the preparation of gifts, collecting monetary offerings, baptisms, other sacramental celebrations, RCIA, and other items not specifically mentioned in this document. Consider the readiness of your parish community before making any changes.
4. All ministers of Holy Communion (ordinary and extraordinary ministers) must sanitize their hands immediately prior to the distribution of Holy Communion.
5. It is prudent to continue to provide hand sanitizer at all church entrances. Parishes may determine appropriate routines for cleaning and sanitizing worship spaces.

III. Suggested Message to Parishioners about the restoration of the Obligation for Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation

1. Archbishop Kurtz will be sharing a message to the faithful in the September 2, 2021, issue of *The Record*.
2. Pastors should begin to share this announcement with parishioners as soon as you deem appropriate. Below is some suggested language:

Archbishop Kurtz is restoring the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation effective the weekend of September 4-5, 2021. Archbishop Kurtz will include a message to parishioners about this development in the September 2 issue of *The Record*, and we encourage your review of his reflections and insights about the centrality of the Holy Eucharist in our lives as Catholics. Those parishioners who are ill, immunocompromised, or have severe fears or anxiety as well as those who care for those who are ill are always exempt from this obligation. (See *Catechism of the Catholic Church* #2181). Parishioners also may exercise prudent caution about Mass attendance for those who cannot be vaccinated, such as children under the age of 12. Please be in touch with the parish if you have any specific questions about this obligation.

Archbishop Kurtz requires masks for Masses and other indoor parish activities for those who are not yet vaccinated against COVID-19, especially during this time of high transmission of the Delta variant. Masks also are required by students, faculty, staff, and visitors in all school settings,

including school Masses, and for any parish programming involving children who are unable to be vaccinated, such as parish religious education programs. Archbishop Kurtz also strongly encourages those who are eligible to get the vaccination if they have not done so already.

3. The Archdiocesan Communications Office and the Office of Worship will be sharing a series of videos with pastors that deal with themes of invitation, obligation, and the centrality of the Eucharist in our lives as Catholics. Pastors will be invited to tape a personal introduction to the invitation video, and we suggest that you begin to share this video in the next few weeks as we move toward the September 4-5 weekend. Further information will be send by the Communications and Worship Office.

Please contact the Office of Worship with questions 502-471-2128 or worship@archlou.org.